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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/913,320	10/09/2001	Ernst Freydl	5055	8497

7590

03/19/2003

Shoemaker & Mattare
Crystal Plaza Building Suite 1203
2001 Jefferson Davis Highway
PO Box 2286
Arlington, VA 22202-0286

EXAMINER

MANOHARAN, VIRGINIA

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1764

10

DATE MAILED: 03/19/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/913,320

Applicant(s)

FREYDL ET AL.

Examiner

Virginia Manoharan

Art Unit

1764

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 December 2002.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 13-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 13-16, 23 and 24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 17-22 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 9.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

Art Unit: 1764

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 13-16 and 23-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over anyone of Kowarski, Kuhn et al or Holland.

Anyone of the above references are applied for the same reasons as set forth at page 3 of the previous Office action.

Claims 17-22 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicant's arguments filed Dec. 27, 2002 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicants' following arguments such as: "... None of the documents provides motivation to connect the filling openings of sample vessels in a hermetic manner, either individually or in groups, with means for producing a vacuum. All the documents teach one, instead, to connect a whole array of samples to a vacuum source; therefore, they teach opposite the present invention" is not persuasive of patentability for the following reasons.

However, Kuhn's disclosure e.g., at col. 12, lines 40-64 of "... the vacuum system ... depending on the embodiment ... factors ... can be applied individually, or in

Art Unit: 1764

any combination, as selected by the user ... vacuum can be selectively activated and controlled to evaporate solution within a multiplicity of container ..." would at least be suggestive of the communication of the filling openings of sample vessels with the means for producing a vacuum. In like manner, Kowarski's disclosure e.g., at col. 4, lines 8-16 and at col. 6, lines 12-15, of "... the upper body 13 is evacuated, it is sealed ... the cover 36 ... is preferably secured to the top portion of the upper body 13 ... This permits selective control of the pressure levels applied to the upper body 13 to suit various characteristic of the liquids being evaporated.." would likewise be suggestive of the communication of the filling openings of sample vessels with the means of producing a vacuum.

The test for obviousness is what the teachings of the references would have suggested to those of ordinary skill in the art. See *in re Keller* '642 F.2d 413, 208 USPQ 871 (CCPA 1981).

Thus, in the absence of anything which may be "new" or "unexpected result", a *prima facie* case of obviousness has been established by the art and has not been rebutted.

Unexpected results must be established by factual evidence. Mere arguments or conclusory statements in the specification, applicants' amendments, or the Brief do not suffice. *In re Lindner*, 457 F.2d 506, 508, 173, 140 (CCPA 1978).

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

Art Unit: 1764

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Virginia Manoharan whose telephone number is 703-308-3844. The examiner can normally be reached on Tuesday-Friday from 7:30 am to 6:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Glenn Caldarola can be reached on 703-308-4311. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9310 for regular communications and 703-872-9462 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0661.

V. Manoharan/mn
March 18, 2003

gls
VIRGINIA MANOHARAN
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